



StudentTracker for High Schools

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What Is StudentTracker?

StudentTracker is a service developed by the National Student Clearinghouse that provides continuing collegiate enrollment and degree information on high school alumni. It includes enrollment status and a graduation indicator containing, in many instances, the specific degree(s) awarded and major course(s) of study.

2. We Already Use Student Surveys & State Reports, Why Should We Use StudentTracker?

Surveys are often very expensive, have low response rates, and can produce misleading results because respondents can provide answers that reflect intentions rather than actual events. State reports often do not include private or out-of-state institutions or go beyond the first year of college attendance.

On the other hand, StudentTracker:

- Uses enrollment and degree information from more than 3,300 collegiate institutions that enroll over 92% of all U.S. higher education students
- Tracks students through their entire collegiate experience
- Receives data from all types of institutions (two-year/ four-year, graduate, public/private, trade, vocational, etc.) and every state in the nation, D.C. and U.S. territories
- Is very cost effective

3. What Does The Service Include?

Each year, you will receive a comprehensive report on the postsecondary enrollment and graduation of your high school graduates that includes:

- Aggregate data presented as more than 30 easy-to-read color graphs and charts summarizing your graduates' college access, retention and completion rates, including:
 - Percentage who enrolled in college after high school graduation and when (i.e., immediately, during the first year, during the first two years)
 - Freshman-to-sophomore retention
 - Percentage who have a college degree, if available (requires at least six years of postsecondary enrollment data)

- Number of years since high school graduation that it took your students to obtain their first postsecondary degree
- Progress of a single class through postsecondary education, including first enrollment, retention, re-enrollment after stop outs, graduation, and drop outs
- Comparison between collegiate enrollment and graduation for:
 - » In-state vs. out-of-state institutions
 - » Public vs. private institutions
 - » Two-year vs. four-year institutions

- List of the postsecondary institutions where your students most often enrolled immediately after they graduated high school
- Individual student data that you can combine with your own information to analyze educational trends and patterns by any variable you choose

To see a sample report, visit

www.studentclearinghouse.org/highschools

4. How Often Will We Receive Reports?

You will receive a StudentTracker report:

- After you sign up and submit your historic graduate data (see "*How Do We Implement StudentTracker?*")
- Once a year in the fall (prior to the annual report release, you will receive a reminder to submit your new diploma records)
- Whenever you request a report during the year

5. Is Student Unit Level Data Shared With The High School Or District?

Student unit level data is returned to the data provider along with postsecondary entry, persistence, and completion information added by the Clearinghouse.

6. Is StudentTracker FERPA-Compliant?

Yes. All Clearinghouse programs, including StudentTracker, comply with FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). Our compliance enables secondary high schools or districts and the Clearinghouse to safely and securely exchange data

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on high school graduates and their postsecondary enrollment and graduation achievements.

7. How Does The Clearinghouse Maintain Data Security?

The Clearinghouse uses secure computer systems and transmission protocols, encrypted files and operational safeguards. In addition, we take proactive measures to limit the risk of lost or stolen data. We have a multi-year record of high-volume data transfer and storage without a single instance of loss.

8. Does The Clearinghouse Sell Student Lists For Commercial Purposes?

Absolutely not! The Clearinghouse only returns information to the organization that sent us the original student data request so they can track student progress and validate educational achievements.

9. How Do We Implement StudentTracker?

1. Sign a participation agreement with the Clearinghouse
2. Pay the invoice
3. Create and transmit your graduate file

Once you return your signed agreement and pay the invoice, a StudentTracker research analyst will contact you to guide you through implementation. You will provide the Clearinghouse with a history file of your diploma recipients in an Excel format, including their names, birth dates, Social Security numbers (if available), and diploma award dates. After each graduation period, you will send us records of new diploma recipients.

You will receive step-by-step instructions on how to create your history file and new graduate updates. Your StudentTracker research analyst will also tell you how to set up your secure FTP account, where you will upload your files and download your StudentTracker reports.

10. How Much Does It Cost To Participate?

The cost is \$425 per high school per year, which includes *unlimited* use of StudentTracker. Updated reports can be requested at any time during the year. You can also send as many files and request as many years worth of data as you like during the year.

11. How Do We Exchange Information With The Clearinghouse?

You can send and receive student-level files in ASCII or Excel formats, programmed according to standard layout specifications provided by the Clearinghouse. Your StudentTracker aggregate report is provided to you as a PDF file. Files are transmitted over the Internet using secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP). Our StudentTracker research analysts are available to assist users and provide programming and file exchange guidance.

12. How Much Computer Programming Time Is Required?

School districts have completed programming in as little as five hours. Depending on the size of your district, you may be able to send and receive information in an Excel format, which does not require computer programming.

13. Do I Need Special Software To Access, View Or Print My Reports?

No. The aggregate report requires Adobe Reader 5.0 or higher to accurately open and view. Most browsers already have the reader plug-in, which is available as a free download from www.adobe.com. The student-level detail report is delivered as a comma separated values (CSV) file. This is a commonly-used data file format that you can open in Excel and import into most database software.

14. What Is The National Student Clearinghouse?

The Clearinghouse is a non-profit organization comprising more than 3,300 colleges and universities that enroll over 92% of all postsecondary students. These institutions continuously update our database of more than 93 million college student records, the only one of its kind in the nation. Colleges use the Clearinghouse's electronic process to streamline reporting of enrollment status and degree verifications to authorized third parties, such as the Department of Education, state loan guaranty agencies, other colleges and universities, and secondary school districts.

**For more information, visit
www.studentclearinghouse.org/highschools**